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FARMERS EXPECTING ABOVE AVERAGE YIELDS IN 2005

Tennessee farmers are expecting above average yields for most of their 2005 crops, despite above normal temperatures and only widely scattered showers since the remnants of Hurricane Dennis passed through in mid-July. Based on an August 1 crop yield survey conducted by the Tennessee Field Office of USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service, cotton and soybean yields, while down from last year, are well above the average for the past five years. Corn yields are down markedly from last year's record, but are still the fourth highest ever for Tennessee. Record hay yield and production are projected for the second year in a row, while tobacco yield prospects decreased from a year ago, according to recent survey results. State Director Debra Kenerson stated, "Despite relatively dry conditions across the State this summer, most crops are enduring the heat and showing excellent yield potential heading into the fall." The August forecast, which is based on farmers' expectations of final yields as of the first of the month, showed the following: **Corn**, 128 bushels per acre, down 12 bushels from a year earlier; **Cotton**, 852 pounds per acre, down 48 pounds from last year but the second highest yield on record; **Soybeans**, 40 bushels per acre, 1 bushel below the previous year; **Burley Tobacco**, 1,900 pounds per acre, down 20 pounds from last year; and **Hay**, 2.60 tons per acre, up 0.1 tons from last year and a new state record.

CORN PRODUCTION DOWN 17 PERCENT

Tennessee's corn production is forecast at 71.7 million bushels, down 17 percent from a year ago. Based on conditions as of August 1, yields are expected to average 128 bushels per acre, 12 bushels below 2004. This year's forecast, however, ranks fourth best among historical yields. Producers expect to harvest 560,000 acres for grain, down 9 percent from last year and the lowest since 1995. Dry weather over the State's major production areas caused pollination problems and, as a result, many fields have corn plants with fewer and smaller ears. The majority of the corn crop was planted by mid-May, but the month proved to be one of the driest on record. This weather trend continued into the silking and beyond stage, causing reports of twisting in some areas. Fortunately, Hurricane Dennis brought some relief in the form of cooler temperatures and much needed rainfall, boosting crop conditions considerably. As of the first week of August, 91 percent of the crop had reached the dough stage with three-fifths of the crop having entered the dent or beyond stage, a few days ahead of schedule.

SOYBEAN YIELDS OUTSTANDING FOR THIRD YEAR IN A ROW

Soybean production is forecast at 48.0 million bushels, down less than 1 percent from last year. Soybean yields are forecast at 40 bushels per acre, 1 bushel below 2004, and only 2 bushels below the record set in 2003. Acreage for harvest is estimated at 1.20 million acres, up 20,000 acres from a year ago. Tennessee's soybean crop was planted by the middle of June and much of the crop was blooming by month's end, a pace two weeks ahead of normal. Producers have been diligently scouting and spraying fungicides and insecticides as a preventative measure. The planting of more early-maturing varieties than normal this year has helped to minimize the effect of above normal temperatures over the past several weeks, keeping yields expectations in line with last year's more moderate growing season. As of August 7, ninety-five percent of the crop was blooming with nearly 90 percent of the acreage setting pods, both well ahead of normal.

NEW RECORD FOR COTTON PRODUCTION

Tennessee's cotton production is forecast at 1,110,000 bales, surpassing last year's record by 126,000 bales. Cotton yields are expected to average 852 pounds per acre, down 48 pounds from a year ago but the second highest on record. Producers expect to harvest 625,000 acres, up 19 percent from 2004. It was a "model" year for planting cotton, as there were no rain delays and soil temperatures were good. Cool weather during early spring caused some delays in emergence, but adequate moisture, sunshine, and heat during June helped the crop to take off. By the end of July, development was running a few days ahead of the five-year average. As of August 7, eighty-six percent of the crop was rated in good-to-excellent condition, virtually identical to the crop condition rating of last year's tremendous crop.

(OVER)

LOWEST BURLEY PRODUCTION SINCE 1927

As of August 1, burley production is forecast at 32.3 million pounds, 30 percent below a year ago and the lowest production in 78 years. Driving this low level is the tobacco buy-out, which has resulted in burley acreage dipping below the 20,000 acre mark for the first time since 1922. Yields are forecast to average 1,900 pounds per acre, down 20 pounds from 2004. Tobacco transplanting began on schedule in early May and was completed slightly ahead of the 5-year average by the end of June. Black Shank has caused moderate to severe damage in a few areas of the State. Over half of the acreage had been topped by August 7, with the crop rated in mostly good condition. Tennessee’s dark-fired tobacco yields are forecast at 3,000 pounds. Dark Air-Cured is forecast to yield 2,700 pounds per acre, down 50 pounds from 2004.

SECOND CONSECUTIVE STATE RECORD FOR HAY YIELD AND PRODUCTION

Hay production, excluding alfalfa, is forecast at 4.81 million tons, 1 percent above the previous record set in 2004. Yields are expected to average 2.6 tons per acre, up 0.1 tons from last year and if realized, a new record. During much of June and July, harvest continued at a normal pace allowing many farmers to get a second cutting. Hay has remained in mostly good condition throughout the growing season.

APPLE PRODUCTION DOWN 22 PERCENT

Apple production is estimated at 9.0 million pounds, down 22 percent from last year’s production of 11.0 million pounds. Development has been progressing behind last year and the normal pace for both budding and blooming. In late April, there were reports of frost damage, which had a negative impact on East Tennessee production. There were also some reports of loss due to fireblight.

CROP FORECASTS: TENNESSEE AND UNITED STATES, AUGUST 1, 2005, WITH COMPARISONS

Crop	Unit	Harvested Acres		Yield Per Acre		Production	
			Indicated		Indicated		Indicated
		2004	2005	2004	2005	2004	2005
		Thousands		Number of Units		Thousands	
TENNESSEE							
Apples	lb.	---	---	---	---	11,000	9,000
Corn for grain	bu.	615	560	140	128	86,100	71,680
Cotton ¹	lb.	525	625	900	852	984	1,110
Hay, All (excluding Alfalfa)	ton	1,900	1,850	2.50	2.60	4,750	4,810
Peaches	ton	---	---	---	---	1.95	1.90
Soybeans	bu.	1,180	1,200	41.0	40.0	48,380	48,000
Tobacco, All	lb.	30.26	23.26	2,161	2,189	65,381	50,918
Dark-fired (22 & 23)	lb.	5.72	5.72	3,115	3,000	17,816	17,160
Burley (31)	lb.	24.0	17.0	1,920	1,900	46,080	32,300
One-sucker (35)	lb.	.54	.54	2,750	2,700	1,485	1,458
Winter Wheat	bu.	280	170	49.0	60.0	13,720	10,200
UNITED STATES							
Apples	lb.	---	---	---	---	10,419,900	9,837,100
Corn for grain	bu.	73,632	74,368	160.4	139.2	11,807,217	10,349,841
Cotton ¹	lb.	13,057	13,657	855	748	23,251	21,291
Hay, All (excluding Alfalfa)	ton	40,209	39,605	2.05	1.92	82,391	76,068
Peaches	ton	---	---	---	---	1,307.1	1,233.9
Soybeans	bu.	73,958	72,184	42.5	38.7	3,140,996	2,791,133
Tobacco, All	lb.	408,040	316,860	2,155	2,137	879,227	677,088
Dark-fired (22 & 23)	lb.	11.73	12.52	3,167	3,179	37,151	39,800
Burley (31)	lb.	153.15	107.60	1,908	1,893	292,172	203,740
One-sucker (35)	lb.	4.26	4.04	2,799	2,787	11,922	11,258
Winter Wheat	bu.	34,462	34,271	43.5	44.4	1,499,434	1,520,848

¹ Production in 480-lb. net weight bales. U.S. production includes American-Pima cotton.